

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4100

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 1708

E. O. 1165 2: GDS

TAGS: WHO, KS, KN, MY

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA - ROK SPECIAL
ENVOY

REF: (A) STATE 073819, (B) KUALA LUMPUR 1586

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY DR. KHY HAH CHOI RECENTLY VISITED KUALA LUMPUR FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOM OFFICIALS ON PROBLEM OF RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA. IN DISCUSSION WITH DR. CHOI, WHO INVITED ME TO MEET WITH HIM AT HIS HOTEL, AND LATER WITH ROK AMBASSADOR KIM, I LEARNED THAT DR. CHOI ENCOUNTERED A " STONE WALL " SO FAR AS GOM INTENTIONS TOWARD THE RECOGNITION ISSUE ARE CONCERNED. IN FINAL DISCUSSION WITH PM RAZAK, CHOI WAS TOLD THAT RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA HAD REACHED POINT WHERE BOTH SIDES ARE NOW CONSIDERING

WORDING OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE. END SUMMARY.

2. BOTH CHOI AND KIM WERE PERTURBED BY ABRUPT, ALMOST RUDE MANNER IN WHICH THEIR REPRESENTATIONS WERE RECEIVED. THEY CONSIDERED IT PARTICULARLY EMBARRASSING THAT ON VERY DAY CHOI ARRIVED IN K. L. OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY GOM WAS RELEASED TO PRESS INDICATING INTENTION TO PROCEED FORTH- WITH WITH RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA. IN SUBSEQUENT
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DISCUSSION WITH GHAZALI SHAFI, MFA SEC GEN ZAITON, AND PM RAZAK, THE KOREANS WERE TOLD THAT DUE TO BASIC POLICY OF NEUTRALITY OF GOM, THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF WITHHOLDING RECOGNITION FROM NORTH KOREA. GOM HOPED THAT CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA WOULD CONTINUE IN FUTURE AS IN PAST, AND POINT WAS REPEATEDLY ADVANCED THAT MALAYSIAN RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA RATHER THAN DISRUPTING DIALOGUE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA WOULD, IN GOM OPINION, ADVANCE CAUSE OF RECONCILIATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF STABLE PEACE.

3. KOREANS SPELLED OUT IN DETAIL ALL REASONS WHY HASTY RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA, OR BACK DOOR MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION, BY ACQUIESCENCE TO NORTH KOREA'S BID FOR WHO MEMBERSHIP, SERVED TO FURTHER HARDEN THE NORTH KOREA POSITION IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE. KOREANS POINTED OUT LONG AND CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN SEOUL AND KUALA LUMPUR, NOTED THE CONSIDERABLE TRADE THAT HAD BEEN DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, WITH BALANCE HEAVILY IN FAVOR OF MALAYSIA, NOTING INCIDENTLY THAT THIS TRADE WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MALAYSIA'S TRADE WITH ANY COMMUNIST COUNTRY. GOM RESPONSE, HOWEVER, WAS MERELY BLAND EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE.

4. ON WHO ISSUE, KOREANS WERE TOLD THAT IN EVENT DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION HAD BEEN MADE PRIOR TO WHO MEETING, GOM WOULD, OF COURSE, VOTE FOR INCLUSION OF NORTH KOREA IN WHO. IF RECOGNITION HAD NOT YET BEEN EXTENDED, GOM WOULD ABSTAIN FROM VOTE ON THE ISSUE IN WHO MEETING.

5. AMBASSADOR KIM TOLD ME THAT ROK WAS SO DISTURBED OVER GOM ATTITUDE THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO BREAK IN RELATIONS WHEN GOM RECOGNIZES NORTH KOREA. I EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THIS WAS AN EXTREMELY DRASTIC REFLEX, ONE THAT DID NOT SEEM TO ADVANCE EITHER INTERESTS OF ROK OR CAUSE OF GENERAL ASIAN COOPERATION.

6. I INFORMED AMBASSADOR KIM THAT I WOULD BE MAKING REPRESENTATIONS TO GOM ON THIS ISSUE IN MEETING APRIL 24 WITH SEC GEN ZAITON (PER STATE 073819). HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION
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FOR THIS ACTION BUT EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT NOTHING SEEMED LIKELY TO DEFLECT GOM FROM ITS HEADLONG RUSH TO RECOGNIZE NORTH KOREA.
LYDMAN

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